

REMARKS

Claims 1-37 were examined by the Office, and in the Office Action of September 17, 2007 all claims are rejected. With this response claims 1, 6-7, 12, 14, 16-18, 23-26, 28-32, 34-35 and 37 are amended, and new claim 38 is added. The claims are amended in order to place the claims into better form, and are not amended to distinguish the claims from the cited references.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of the following discussion.

Claim Rejections Under § 102

In section 4, on page 2 of the Office Action, claim 37 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Weinberger et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,680,129). Claim 37 contains limitations similar to those recited in claim 1, and therefore for at least the reasons discussed below with respect to claim 1, claim 37 is not disclosed or suggested by Weinberger.

Claim Rejections Under § 103

In section 6, on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-4, 9-13, 19-23, 26-33 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberger in view of Kato (U.S. Patent No. 5,392,037). Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited in claim 1. The cited references at least fail to disclose or suggest encoding a code word to indicate the selected encoding method, and encoding the pixel into the encoded bit string so that the encoded bit string has a restricted number of bits that is fixed for substantially all of the encoded pixels in the image, as recited in claim 1.

Weinberger is directed to a lossless image compression encoder/decoder system having a context determination circuit and a code table generator. The image compressor uses the context of a pixel to be encoded to predict the value of the pixel and to determine a prediction error. The image compressor contains a context quantizer that quantizes the context of pixels. The image compressor counts the error values for each quantized context and uses these counts to generate context-specific

coding tables for each quantized context. As it encodes a particular pixel, the encoder looks up the prediction error in the context-specific coding table for the context of the pixel and encodes that value. To decompress an image, the decompressor determines and quantizes the context of each pixel being decoded.

In Weinberger context values are received from the pixel sequence generator (1209). The context values are fed into the context determination unit, and the context determination unit outputs a context index. The context index is input into the decoding table selector (709), which uses the index to fetch an appropriate Huffman table. See Weinberger column 17, lines 1-27. The Huffman tables are used by the encoder to encode the prediction residuals for each individual pixel in the image being compressed. The image decoder receives an encoded pixel and the context values, i.e. the neighboring pixels of the encoded pixels, and Huffman tables. The values of the context pixels are used to select the Huffman table which the encoder has selected when encoding the encoded pixel in question.

In contrast to claim 1, Weinberger discloses that the decoder receives the context values and the context determination unit of the decoder generates an index on the basis of which the decoding table selector selects the decoding table. However, there is no teaching or suggestion that a code word is added to indicate the selected coding method, as recited in claim 1. The context values, i.e. pixel values, are not the equivalent as receiving a code word, and using the code word as an indication of the selected encoding method or of the decoding method to be selected. Therefore, Weinberger fails to disclose or suggest encoding a code word to indicate the selected encoding method, since the context values are not the equivalent of the code word recited in claim 1.

In addition, Weinberger also fails to disclose or suggest encoding the pixel into the encoded bit string so that the encoded bit string has a restricted number of bits that is fixed for substantially all of the encoded pixels in the image, as recited in claim 1. Instead, Weinberger only discloses that in Huffman coding at least one bit is needed for encoding each pixel, and does not disclose that Huffman coding forms one-bit per pixel code words. See Weinberger column 4, lines 49-50. Furthermore, Weinberger only discloses that the context model is fixed, but does not disclose or suggest that the

context model has a fixed length. See Weinberger column 6, lines 15-16. Therefore, for at least this additional reason, Weinberger fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited in claim 1. Kato fails to make up for the deficiencies in the teachings of Weinberger, and therefore the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited in claim 1.

Independent claims 12, 23 and 30-32 contain limitations similar to those recited in claim 1, and therefore for at least the reasons discussed above in relation to claim 1, are not disclosed or suggested by the cited references.

The claims depending from the above mentioned independent claims are not disclosed or suggested by the cited references at least in view of their dependencies.

On page 12 of the Office Action, claims 6-7, 14, 17-18, 25 and 34-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberger in view of Kato, and in further view of Jones et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,847,866). The claims rejected above all ultimately depend from an independent claim, and since Jones fails to make up for the deficiencies in the teachings of Weinberger and Kato with respect to the independent claims, the claims are patentable over the cited references at least in view of their dependencies.

In section 6, on page 14 of the Office Action, claims 5 and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberger in view of Kato, and in further view of Jones and Anderson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,790,705). The claims rejected above all ultimately depend from an independent claim, and since Anderson fails to make up for the deficiencies in the teachings of Weinberger and Kato with respect to the independent claims, the claims are patentable over the cited references at least in view of their dependencies.

New Claim 38

New claim 38 contains limitations similar to those recited in claim 1, and therefore is believed to be patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons discussed above in relation to claim 1.

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited. The undersigned hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge Deposit Account No. 23-0442 for any fee deficiency required to submit this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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